EXTRACTS

FROM

THE MINUTES

OF THE

Yearly Meeting of Women Friends,

HELD IN

PHILADELPHIA.

By Adjournments from the Fourteenth Day of Fifth Month, to the Eighteenth of the same, inclusive.

1877.

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED FOR THE YEARLY MEETING.
1877.

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EXTRACTS.

At a Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, held in Philadelphia by adjournments from the 14th of Fifth Month to the 18th of the same, inclusive.

Being once more favored to meet together to transact the business of our religious society, a fervent desire has been expressed that we may be preserved in a humble condition, waiting to know the will of our Heavenly Father in order to realize the cementing influence of His love.

Reports were received from all our Quarterly Meetings, and the Representatives named in them were all present, except ten. For the absence of four satisfactory reasons were assigned. Eight of the reports mentioned receiving the Extracts.

Interesting epistles from our sisters of Ohio, New York, Baltimore and Illinois, were read. The subjects presented in them drew forth much responsive expression. The responsibilities connected with a membership in our Religious Society, were impressively acknowledged, and we were urged to be so guarded in our actions and words that those with whom we associate may have no cause for judgment against us.

To examine and settle the Treasurer's report, a committee was appointed.

The Representatives were desired to come together at the close of the meeting, to bring forward the names of two Friends to serve as Clerk and Assistant Clerk the present year.

We have been thankful for the evidence of Divine love spread over us, and affectionately encouraged to be faithful in little things.

Afternoon.

Susanna M. Parrish, on behalf of the Representatives, reported they met and were not prepared to make any change in the Clerks. Martha Meller and Jane D. Satterthwait were therefore re-appointed.

A minute was received and read from our friend Isaac Hicks, a minister from Westbury Monthly Meeting, held at Westbury, in the State of New York.

To assist the Clerks in gathering the exercises of the meeting daily, that they may be read at the opening of each morning session, a committee was appointed.

The epistle from our sisters of Indiana was read, carrying with it the evidence of Gospel love.

Third Day—Morning.

Information was received from Men's Meeting, that the proposed alterations in our discipline, as introduced by Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting and adopted last year by us, requires a modification to make it a consistent whole. A committee was appointed to unite with men Friends for further consideration of the subject.

The reading of the first two queries and their answers, introduced the meeting into the state of our society. Much earnest concern was expressed that we do not neglect the attendance of our religious meetings. If our first love is for God, we will, when ability permits, be drawn to meet with our friends to worship Him. For this service we shall feel a renewal of spiritual strength.

We were cited to the golden rule of doing unto others as we would they should do unto us, and advised to cultivate that love which thinketh no evil, is slow to take offence, makes us careful to watch *most* ourselves that we make no incautious remarks of others, and thus eradicate the injurious spirit of criticism. Let us remember that manners and language which might be considered harsh and uncharitable, are often due to difference of temperament.

Afternoon.

The review of the state of our society was continued as far as the sixth query. Although some of the replies were of a character to encourage the belief that there is an increasing desire to practice the various requirements of the Discipline, yet an acknowledgment from most of the Quarterly Meetings of continued deficiencies occasioned much concern.

Earnest exhortations were given for individual examination, relative to the faithful support of all our testimonies. The importance of those comprised in the queries which have been before us, cannot be over estimated.

Although we are aware that a more general interest has been awakened for a knowledge of the Scriptures

by the efforts of the First-day School Association, yet this will not excuse the parent from the requirement to collect the family for the reading of portions from this treasury of wisdom and truth.

The indulgence in the craving for what is termed light literature was clearly shown to be as unhealthy in its effects upon the mind as a poisonous compound upon the physical organization, requiring even more vigilant scrutiny into its characteristics, being without the cautionary label of poison attached. Urgently were the young solicited, while memory was strong, to lay up treasures which in old age or sickness would prove as bread to the soul.

Much sorrow was expressed by the continued evidence that our members are not liberated from the influence of the extravagant fashions of the world, and appeals were heard from many, who, by experience, can testify that in these things are only vanity and vexation of spirit.

Our privileges, regarding a free gospel ministry, were compared with those of the founders of this religious society, and the consequent responsibility impressively presented with exhortations for serious reflection upon this important testimony. While considering the subjects embraced in the fourth query, encouragement was afforded by the information of an increasing care in our members to discourage the indulgence of all intoxicating beverages as a drink, and to discard in culinary preparation all articles thought to require their use. We were earnestly solicited to use our influence prayerfully and faithfully in opposing the spread of intemperance in our community. The example lately

given by the wife of the chief magistrate of this country, in directing that wine should be excluded from their table, was considered worthy of especial notice, and should be accepted as a fitting example for all in authority, believing their firmness will be a powerful aid in the right direction.

Fourth Day—Morning.

The Fourth Query has been again brought into view and a very earnest feeling manifested that we might, if way opened, convey to the wife of our President our appreciation of the firm stand she has taken in the cause of temperance. After much expression of unity, a committee was appointed to prepare an address to her.

An epistle from our sisters of Genesee Yearly Meeting has been read and our meeting has been refreshed by the feeling of sisterly love.

Afternoon.

The Seventh and Eighth Queries were read. During their consideration we were impressively reminded of our individual obligations. The Seventh Query brought before us the importance of living within the bounds of our circumstances, and we were advised not to desire articles for which we have not the means to pay, even though they may seem a necessity. By care in this respect we might lighten the burdens of our fathers, husbands and brothers.

The young who enter into the marriage relation, were solicited to become acquainted with domestic duties, so

that they can help themselves and know how to appreciate the labors of those in their employ, and thus not make unnecessary demands upon them.

The answers to the Second Annual Query were read, also an interesting report from the Yearly Meeting's Committee on Education.

Fifth Day—Afternoon.

Epistles for our sisters of New York, Illinois and Genesee were read, and with some slight alterations approved.

The Genesee and Baltimore epistles were directed to be printed in the Extracts.

The crowded condition of this Yearly Meeting during its sessions, having long been cause of much concern, it was the judgment of many Friends that the number of our constituent branches was sufficient to form more than one Yearly Meeting. Unity was expressed with the appointment of a committee for deliberate consideration upon this important subject, if way should open in Men's Meeting for co-operation. This information was conveyed to them, but they were not prepared at this time to take any action in the matter, except to recommend that the subject may rest thoughtfully with our members, and that the Representatives introduce it to their meetings, which was approved.

Sixth Day—Morning.

Epistles for our sisters of Indiana, Baltimore and Ohio have been read and approved, and with those read

the day before were directed to be signed by the Clerk.

The address of encouragement to the wife of our President was also read, and, after some slight alterations, was united with. Two Friends were appointed to deliver it to her.

The minutes of the Representative Committee or Meeting for Sufferings, were read.

The committee to examine the accounts of Esther Bancroft, Treasurer, reported they found them correct.

A nominating committee to unite with men Friends in bringing forward the names of those qualified to serve as a Committee on Education, was appointed.

Afternoon.

We have had an acceptable visit from our friend, Isaac Hicks.

Portions of the interesting report from the Committee on Indian Affairs, were read, showing that their labors had been blessed. The same Friends were continued, and they were encouraged to persevere in earnest labor.

The names of the Committee on Education, proposed by the nominating committee, were approved.

The Friends named to unite with men Friends to take into consideration the change in the wording of the Discipline, so as to give Women's Meetings equal voice with Men's Meetings in the disciplinary transaction of our society, produced a report which was united with.

A memorial of our dear friend Lydia Gillingham, also one of our dear aged friend Elizabeth Comfort, were read, to the refreshment of many minds, and awakened the desire that we may endeavor to follow

their example in faithfully fulfilling every duty in life made known to us.

We acknowledge the loving kindness of our Heavenly Father, which has been felt to crown our annual gathering. Hoping we may all carry home with us the many loving and tender entreaties which have been made for the welfare of the church, we separate to meet again, if permitted, next year.

MARTHA MELLOR.
Clerk.

From Baltimore Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, held by adjournments, from the 30th of 10th Month, 1876, to the 2d of 11th Month inclusive.

To the next Yearly Meeting of Women Friends to be held in Philadelphia:

Dear Sisters.—In the flowings of Gospel love, and with feelings of gratitude to Him who alone can beget in us (as we draw near to receive of Him, the inexhaustible Fountain) this pure and vivifying power, we respond to your excellent epistle.

How binding, how beautiful, is this Christian interchange and sympathy of feeling! This love, flowing as a peaceful river through the midst of the Church, keeping fresh and pure all the little branches, as they mingle in the deeper stream of these solemn feasts, receiving

fresh and new impulses to swell the tide of Christian feeling.

Our Meeting is not so large as usual, and many who have gathered with us in times past, will come no more. We miss their presence and their countenances of affectionate beaming; but they have burst the bonds of mortality, and have passed on into the keeping of Him who doeth all things well. A little while, and we shall follow on. May we know a preparation, and be ready when the command shall be given. We have the company of ministering Friends from other parts of the vineyard, most acceptably with us; whose labors of love have been as the oil and the wine of the Kingdom, administered with anointing power to the hearts that hunger and thirst after righteousness, and sometimes feel too poor to receive it.

We have been most lovingly and earnestly called to a more practical religious life, in the world and in the home; and we trust that power which has anointed the servant and unfolded the truths, will dwell in the hearts of the hearers, to the effect of carrying on the work, in dedication of soul, and to the honor and glory of the great Head of the Church.

There has been much feeling, and sweet counsel as well as close experience have been expressed on account of the neglect of meetings, and encouragement has been handed forth to attend more closely to this duty, not permitting the many "hindering things" to encroach upon this reasonable service, which, if we perform it in love to our Heavenly Father, He will most amply repay with rich reward.

The subject of extravagance of every kind, has also claimed deep feeling and consideration; and we have been made to feel that the earnest appeals upon this, would strike deep into the hearts of all and take root, if nurtured and tended with a real dedication of spirit, remembering that moral courage is also requisite to promote a true and strong spiritual growth.

In Christian love we bid you farewell, and remain your sisters.

Signed on behalf of the Meeting.

MARY C. CUTLER,
Clerk.

To Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Women Friends:

DEAR SISTERS:—We are again convened in this our annual assembly, where truly the hungry soul has been fed from the Father's bountiful table, where there is bread enough and to spare, showing us that he who formed and fashioned all things is no respector of persons. We may feel ourselves small and of but little account, yet the same protecting care is extended unto all.

The most tiny flower hid from public view, is cared for by the same universal Parent as the towering oak, all have a station to occupy, a mission to perform, and as we feel our minds drawn from the follies and vanities of this world, let us close in with redeeming love that Power which alone can sustain us through all trials and amid the varied scenes of life. Many of our loved and venerated standard bearers are being called from works

to rewards, who have borne the burden and heat of the day. May their mantles rest upon those who follow after them that they too may be diligent laborers in the Lord's vineyard, for "The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few." It is encouraging to see so many of the young manifesting an interest for the welfare of society, thereby strengthening us in that bond of love which flows, as it were, from vessel to vessel, throughout the whole heritage of God. They were tenderly counselled to heed the still small voice within them, for it is the voice of God speaking in their own souls.

May those who now feel called to labor in His service, and have covenanted to lead a purer life, keep their good resolutions and obey every requisition of duty. "Obey my voice and thy soul shall live."

Much sympathy was felt for the dear mothers, and they were exhorted to have a guarded care over their tender offspring; to retire often for prayer, and God would strengthen them to feed those lambs He has committed to their charge, "For it is by the combination of rivulets that the mighty river is formed."

What will all the riches, and glittering things of Time, or the decoration of these bodies, avail us when we are about to bid adieu to all earthly scenes? Better that we make our calling and election sure, then we can look upon death with serenity. The evils of intemperance have been vividly portrayed, and we were admonished to have a watchful care over the erring ones, imploring them to drink deep at that Fountain that faileth not, but will extricate their souls from the thraldom of sin, and establish them upon that immutable rock which is Christ. In entering upon the consideration of the state

of society, by reading the answers to the queries, we find deficiencies still exist, and that there is a remissness with some in the attendance of our Mid-week meetings. Do we fully realize the encouraging language that is held forth to us that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

The prospect of a change of government in Indian affairs causes sadness to pervade our minds, with a feeling that a care by Friends is still needed, and we trust, will be extended to this greatly wronged people to assist them in arising to that degree of civilization and enlightenment we so ardently desire. A First-day School conference has been held, in which encouraging accounts were received from those who are laboring therein, and they were encouraged to continue their efforts in that direction.

We have in attendance several Friends from other Yearly Meetings, whose company and labors of love have been truly acceptable to us. Deep and fervent have been the aspirations of our hearts that we might all be fitted and prepared by the Master's hand, to be willing to spend and be spent in His holy cause, then can we ascribe praise and thanksgiving to His great and Holy name. With feelings of love we bid you an affectionate farewell.

Signed by direction and on behalf of Genesee Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, held at Yarmouth, Ontario, by adjournments from the 12th of 6th Month to the 15th of the same, inclusive, 1876.

PHEBE JANE NOXON,
Clerk.